

From: Uri Guttman
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 11:40pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am not in favor of the current settlement with Microsoft. As someone who has long term experience in the computing field (28 years), I would like to point out the famous BUNCH suit against IBM in the mid-1960's. IBM would announce a new system 2 years before it would be delivered and that would dry up sales for all the other computer vendors. Microsoft (among its many monopolistic actions) has used this vaporware technique many times.

Also I have direct experience with their managerial duplicity. I was a senior software developer with a startup and Microsoft asked us for a proposal of a variant of our product. They even said it didn't have to use any of their software in it. We worked hard and delivered it to them. Two months later we finally got a conference call with them and they first asked us what they could do to make their software (which wasn't good to begin with) usable for our product. But even worse was their statement that they didn't buy paper proposals/projects even though they asked us for it. This came from senior group managers and was obviously the way they did business. They only did this to pick our brains and had no intention of doing business with us.

This is the kind of ingrained lack of ethics in this corporation. Any consent decree without serious teeth will be laughed at and skirted. Just look at the way they ignored the earlier decree about integrating their browser with their OS. By the way, the whole browser issue is a red herring. It is the way they purposely try to destroy other companies with vaporware announcements, lack of API documentation, changing their code to not work with accepted public standards, etc. that should be the crux of this case. I have nothing against strong competition but that implies a level field of some sort. Microsoft owns the playing field and has no business or ethical interest in leveling it. This is antitrust at its deepest fundamentals. This is what Teddy Roosevelt was fighting when he trust busted the robber barons of his day. The railroads and steel companies were also monopolies and used that power to control markets. This is what Microsoft wants and is always trying to do. It is up to the Justice Department and the state AG's to stop this now. Please do not accept this slap on the wrist agreement. Force them to make drastic changes in how they deal with the computing world and other businesses. They must not be allowed to abuse their monopoly power and ruin more companies, the internet and the computing industry in general.

Thank you,

Uri

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Uri Guttman ----- uri@stemsystems.com ----- <http://www.stemsystems.com>
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